

§§ 39.52–39.59 [Reserved]

STANDARDS AND REQUIREMENTS

**§ 39.60 General requirements for site selection and construction of veterans cemeteries.**

(a) The various codes, requirements, and recommendations of State or Tribal Organization and local authorities or technical and professional organizations, to the extent and manner in which those codes, requirements, and recommendations are referenced in this subpart, are applicable to grants involving construction of veterans cemeteries. Additional information concerning these codes, requirements, and recommendations may be obtained from VA, National Cemetery Administration, 810 Vermont Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20420.

(b) The standards in §§ 39.60, 39.61, 39.62, and 39.63 constitute general design and construction criteria and shall apply to all Establishment, Expansion, and Improvement Projects for which Federal assistance is requested under 38 U.S.C. 2408.

(c) In developing these standards, no attempt has been made to comply with all of the various State and local codes and regulations. The standards contained in §§ 39.60, 39.61, 39.62, and 39.63 shall be followed where they exceed State or local codes and regulations. Departure will be permitted, however, when alternate standards are demonstrated to provide equivalent or better design criteria than the standards in these sections. Conversely, compliance is required with State and local codes where such requirements provide a standard higher than those in these sections. The additional cost, if any, in using standards that are higher than those of VA should be documented and justified in the application.

(d) The space criteria and area requirements referred to in these standards shall be used as a guide in planning. Additional area and facilities beyond those specified as basic may be included if found to be necessary to meet the functional requirements of the project but are subject to approval by VA. Substantial deviation from the space criteria or area standards shall be carefully considered and justified.

Failing to meet the criteria or standards or exceeding them by more than 10 percent in the completed plan would be regarded as evidence of inferior design or as exceeding the boundaries of professional requirements. In those projects that unjustifiably exceed maximum space criteria or area requirements, VA funding may be subject to reduction in proportion to the amount by which the space or area of the cemetery exceeds the maximum specified in these standards.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 501, 2408)

[75 FR 34005, June 16, 2010, as amended at 77 FR 4476, Jan. 30, 2012]

**§ 39.61 Site planning standards.**

(a) *Site selection*—(1) *Location*. The land should be located as close as possible to the densest veteran population in the area under consideration.

(2) *Size*. Sufficient acreage shall be available to provide gravesites for estimated needs for at least 20 years. More acreage should be provided where feasible. Acreage could vary depending on the State veteran population and national cemetery availability.

(3) *Accessibility*. The site should be readily accessible by highway. Offsite improvements shall not be funded by the grant.

(4) *Topography*. The land should range from comparatively level to rolling and moderately hilly terrain. Natural rugged contours are suitable only if development and maintenance costs would not be excessive and burial areas would be accessible to elderly or infirm visitors. The land shall not be subject to flooding.

(5) *Water table*. The water table should be lower than the maximum proposed depth of burial.

(6) *Soil requirements*. The soil should be free from rock, muck, unstable composition, and other materials that would hamper the economical excavation of graves by normal methods. In general, the soil should meet the standards of good agricultural land that is capable of supporting turf and trees, with normal care and without the addition of topsoil.